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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending April 04, 2004

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April 5, 2004

WEATHER SUMMARY: Cool, dry conditions persisted during the week of March 28 through April 3. Temperatures in the major cities averaged one to four degrees below normal. Daytime highs were in the 70s with most localities recording at least one high in the 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 40s, 50s and 60s several northern Peninsula localities reporting at least one low in the 30s. Most areas recorded no measurable rain. During the first part of the week a few scattered localities reported from traces to about an inch and a half of rain.

FIELD CROPS: Significant rainfall in Washington County let producers begin planting corn, again, and preparing land for peanuts at a rapid pace. Some Jackson County producers are irrigating corn and also irrigating land prior to planting. Most cotton planting is being delayed due to dry soils and cool temperatures. Most soils are too dry to plant in Madison County. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are decreasing in most areas due to the dry weather. Moisture supplies in nearly all localities are short to adequate. Holmes, Jackson, Madison, Columbia, Union, Baker and Broward counties reported areas of very short soil moisture. Seminole County also reported a few spots with surplus soil moisture.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	6	5	1	2	2	0
Short	46	35	6	40	33	4
Adequate	47	59	83	57	64	86
Surplus	1	1	10	1	1	10

VEGETABLES: Planting is slowing seasonally in southern Peninsula areas. Harvesting in the central and southern Peninsula remains active as growers supply the spring holiday demand. Significant rainfall in Washington and Jackson counties allowed growers to resume watermelon planting. Oldest potatoes are bulking up nicely in the Hastings area. Broccoli, onion and leafy greens harvesting are active in the Hastings region. Vegetables in Leon County have emerged. Other vegetables and non-citrus fruit available include snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, peppers, potatoes, radishes, squash, strawberries and tomatoes.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Producers in Leon County and other northern Peninsula and Panhandle localities are fertilizing pastures.

Winter grazing condition is decreasing rapidly in Madison County. Crimson and Red Clover are heading out in Leon County. The condition of grazing improved with most central and southern Peninsula pastures in mostly fair to good condition. Most Panhandle and northern Peninsula grazing is poor to mostly fair. Cattle are in mostly fair to good condition, statewide.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	5	5	0	0
Poor	10	10	5	5
Fair	50	70	50	50
Good	30	15	40	40
Excellent	5	0	5	5

CITRUS: Clear, cool and windy weather prevailed this week in the citrus belt with daytime high temperatures in the 70s and 80s and lows into the upper 40s on several mornings. Virtually no rainfall was recorded at any stations in the citrus areas this week. Growers are returning to frequent irrigation as trees show abundant new growth. Petal drop is complete in lower interior areas with open bloom to petal drop in all others. Cultural practices are continuing including fertilizations and hedging following harvest. Some growers are beginning post bloom spray applications. Most fresh fruit packinghouses are packing all available varieties with emphasis on export grapefruit which is drawing to a close for the season. Varieties being packed include Valencia oranges, white and colored grapefruit, and Honey tangerines. Processing plants are receiving and processing fruit with weekly volumes of grapefruit beginning to decline and Valencia orange amounts increasing.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	Mar 21	Mar 28	Apr 4
Navel oranges	2,000	2,000	2,000
Early and Mid oranges	124,000	63,000	6,000
Valencia oranges	7,078,000	7,762,000	8,652,000
Grapefruit	2,149,000	1,960,000	1,844,000
Honey tangerines	197,000	214,000	187,000
Temples	58,000	46,000	63,000

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In cooperation with the Florida Cooperative Extension Service whose county directors participate in supplying field information.